

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 24, 2005

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

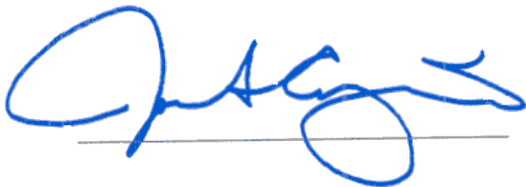
We are writing in response to recent reports that the Pentagon has retained a private marketing firm to gather and analyze extensive personal information from high school students between the ages of 16 and 18 for the purpose of identifying potential military recruits. We ask that you immediately cease these efforts.

We are particularly troubled by the fact that you plan to rely on commercial data and have hired a private marketing firm to assist with the collection and analysis of this sensitive information. As you know, this private company is being given the responsibility to collect, and to disseminate to the Pentagon, personal information of students such as birth dates, social security numbers, ethnicity, grade-point averages, address and telephone information, and areas of study. This personal information, which would be obtained from schools as well as from commercial data brokers, state drivers' license records, and other sources, could then be used to formulate and execute a targeted "marketing" campaign to identify and recruit individuals based on these personal factors.

We recognize the need for a strong military and support the efforts undertaken by the Pentagon to recruit individuals to serve in our Armed Forces. However, we can not condone the hiring of a private company to collect and disseminate the most private information about our youth. We are concerned both with the potential violation of privacy interests and with the potential for identity theft and other misuses of this personal information. We fail to see a legitimate need for the creation of a database containing such personal information and are concerned that it may be an inappropriate effort to profile students based on ethnicity and other personal factors. We are certain that you share this concern and are not in favor of a private marketing campaign conducted on behalf of the military that could improperly use personal information to do just that.

Again, we ask that you immediately cease the creation of this database and stop this private company from collecting and disseminating students' personal information. We also ask that you immediately post, on the Department of Defense website, a standard "opt out" letter that students may execute to stop military recruiters from using their personal information to contact them at home. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Lautenberg

Samuel O. Ferguson

Muriel Nazzari

Samuel K. Haskins

Don Wyden